

## **Guidelines for Writing a Final Outbreak Investigation Report**

**The outline should be adapted as needed for the purpose of clear, concise communication**

**Initial Contact:**

**Date of Contact:**

**Person Contacted:**

**Also Contacted:**

**Report Prepared By:**

- Name(s)

- Title(s)

### **1) Introduction and Background**

- Describe the context of the outbreak:
  - Who → population affected
  - Where → location / place / setting
  - When → Time of onset
  - What → describe clinical findings
  - Why → suspected or known etiology or risk factors
- Describe the primary objective(s) of the investigation

### **2) Initiation of investigation**

- Date and time notification was received by your agency
- Date and time investigation was initiated by the agency

### **3) Investigation Methods**

- Epidemiologic:
  - Any initial investigation methods
  - Data collection and data analysis methods (e.g., case-finding, hypothesis generating interviews, cohort or case-control studies, other epidemiological data collection and analysis)
  - Tools that were relevant to the investigation (Epi curve, attack rate tables, questionnaires used)
- Case definitions (as applicable) Microbiological/toxicological
  - Laboratories involved.
  - Type of specimens and source
  - Type of tests and laboratory methods
- Environmental
  - Review reports developed by environmental responders
  - Describe any trace back investigations that were done such as food products, etc.

### **4) Results**

- Epidemiological
  - Descriptive epidemiology results including:
    - Describe study population

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- Cases
  - Demographic data
  - Clinical data (symptoms, signs, duration of illness, incubation period)
  - Outcome of illness (hospitalization, death, chronic effects)
  - Location of cases (facility, county, city, etc.)
    - Epidemic Curve and other graphs
- Compare characteristics of cases and controls, if applicable.
- Describe exposed population, if applicable
  - Describe the results of analytical studies
- Microbiological / toxicological
  - Number and nature of specimens submitted for testing
  - Results of laboratory testing
- Environmental
  - Describe observations and pertinent findings from environmental investigation(s)
  - Describe the results of trace-back investigations.

### **5) Limitations of the study**

Discuss the limitations of the investigation

### **6) Conclusion / Discussion:** Analysis and interpretation of the investigation results and any conclusions drawn as a result of this investigation.

- Discuss the main hypothesis
- Describe the likely causative agent and mode of transmission.
- Describe the risk factors
- Explain what was done to control the outbreak.
- Describe the conclusions and actions taken.

### **7) Discuss lessons learned**

#### **Recommendations for controlling disease and/or preventing/mitigating exposure:**

- Measures implemented to control this outbreak.
- Recommendations to improve investigation and management of such outbreaks in the future
- Measures to prevent such outbreaks in the future.
- Educational message to the public, public health professionals and policy makers.

#### **General instructions:**

- Outbreak report should be completed within one month of closing the outbreak.
- Final outbreak report is required in the following situations:
  - a- Any outbreak if analytical study was done.
  - b- Outbreaks that require site visit may need a final report if indicated.
  - c- The decision to write a final outbreak report in any other outbreak should be made in case-by-case basis
- Please be careful **not to** mention any personal identifying information.
- Please try not to attribute any specific info to a specific individual / facility